

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000171

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W  
STATE FOR CA/OCS/FROBINSON  
STATE FOR EB/ESC/IEC/ENR/BLEVINE  
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF  
STAT FOR INR/AA  
STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY  
STATE PASS TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER  
STATE PASS DOC FOR PHUPER  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS OPIC FOR CDUFFY  
STATE PASS TDA FOR BTERNET  
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER  
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR SLISER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/07/2009

TAGS: [EPET](#) [EINV](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY STORMS CHEVRON ESCRAVOS FACILITY

REF: ABUJA 167

Classified By: Classified By: Acting Consul General Ronald Kramer for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

Summary

-----  
1. (C) Chevron Texaco (CT) confirmed the storming and occupation of its Escravos facility by Itsekiri villagers from the Okurogo community, for several hours on 4 February. GON security forces re-gained control of the facility by late in the day. No AMCITs or third country nationals were injured or killed in the incident. Post's security contacts stated one community member was killed by friendly fire, and that between one and thirteen were wounded. Press is reporting up to four deaths. Both local CT local guards and GON security forces were injured in the attack. However, CT is not officially confirming any reports of the number of dead or injured. Production was not impacted.

CT Facility Stormed; Deaths Possible but Unconfirmed  
-----

2. (C) For the third time in as many years, Chevron Texaco confirmed the storming of its Escravos facility at approximately 0500 hours on 4 February. Government and Public Affairs General Manager Director Odumabo noted that approximately 500 Itsekiri villagers from Okurogo, CT's host community, cut the perimeter fence at the Escravos facility in multiple locations and entered the compound. (Note: CT contacts have given varying reports, between five and eight, as to the number of locations in which the fence was cut. Regardless, the large number of breaches would appear to indicate a well-organized attack.) They occupied the compound for several hours, but GON security forces re-gained control of the facility by late in the day. No AMCITs or third country nationals were injured or killed in the incident. CT security contacts stated to RSO that one community member was killed by friendly fire, and that between one and thirteen were wounded. However, CT management is not officially confirming any reports of the number of dead or injured. Security contacts also indicated that CT security had been aware of an increased threat, and accordingly had reinforced security.

Local Guards and GON Security Forces Injured  
-----

3. (C) Chevron Texaco Health Safety and Environment Manager Cheryl Robnett reported that during the invasion, community members attacked both local guards and GON security force members. A Nigerian guard employed by CT and one member of the GON security forces were injured and unable to continue to carry out their duties. Several other local guards and security force members required first aid care. (Note: In line with Nigerian law, guards employed by CT are unarmed; GON security forces provided by the GON (but paid by CT) to protect the Escravos facility typically carry AK-47s. CT does not have an agreement with the GON on specific rules of engagement for troops operating within their facilities. Instead, the troops operate according to rules laid out by the GON. End note.)

Situation Remains Tense; Security High  
-----

4. (C) Odumabo told energyoff that CT remains extremely watchful. Security contacts indicated that navy gunboats are patrolling the river around the facility, and the GON is organizing additional forces to be brought in from Warri.

Several CT contacts reported the situation remained tense, as community members continue to circulate freely immediately outside the Escravos perimeter. At least several dozen villagers continue living within about 100 feet of the facility. (Note: To take advantage of potential business transactions with CT employees, villagers maintain a shantytown with numerous dwellings, stores, and bars almost immediately adjacent to the Escravos perimeter fence. CT has been unsuccessful at persuading the community to move these buildings. End note.)

CT Was Re-Negotiating MOU

-----  
15. (C) Robnett noted that CT was in the process of re-negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Okurogo community when the invasion occurred.

Comment

-----  
16. (C) CT continues to experience significant difficulties in its community relations in the Delta region. At the same time the Escravos invasion was occurring, Chevron was attempting to quell a disturbance at its facilities in Onne in Rivers State and seeking to extricate itself from its MOU in Warri. (Note: Production in Warri, representing a third of CT's capacity, has been shut down for over one year, but the MOU with the community is still in effect. End Note.) Nevertheless, CT believes it can continue to operate in the Delta region for some time. Septel will report further on CT's overall assessment of the Delta environment. End Comment.  
KRAMER